



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

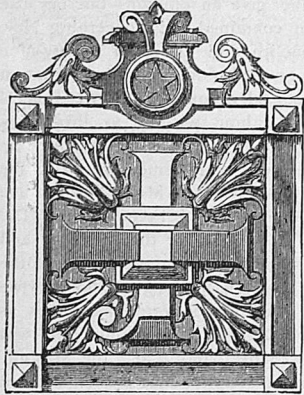
Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# BRIC A BRAC



## QUAINT UTENSILS.

It might strike one, from a casual glance, that the illustrations on this page represent a child's rattle and a pistol. Such an idea would be quite erroneous. The supposed rattle is really a "goupillon," or holy-water sprinkler, and the apparent pistol is a rare and ingenious contrivance for striking a light, a sort of connecting link between the old-fashioned flint and steel and the modern match.

Holy-water sprinklers of one sort or another are in common use in Roman Catholic churches. A simple form consists of a wooden handle about a foot long, at the end of which are fixed a number of little clusters of stiff hairs. But the "goupillon" here illustrated is something quite different. It consists of a hollow ball, pierced with small holes and fixed at the end of a handle. This ball is made in two halves which are screwed together, after a sponge saturated with holy water has been placed inside. Thus prepared, a slight movement of the fore-arm is sufficient to force the water in drops through the holes in the ball. The devotion of the Middle Ages, the care taken in the fabrication of articles designed for church use, made the "goupillon" not infrequently a veritable object of art. The one illustrated is supposed to be of fifteenth-century manufacture, and is still in use at the Cathedral of Coire, in Switzerland. The ornamentation is in the florid Gothic style.

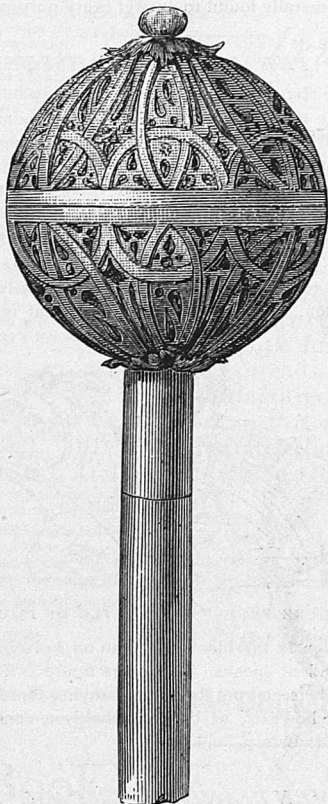
The other utensil presents the exact appearance of a pistol, enriched with finely chiselled ornaments of silver. On pulling the trigger, however, its true character becomes apparent; the upper half of the barrel, fixed upon skilfully concealed hinges, opens like a box-cover, and a small hollow cylinder rises, carrying a cotton wick, to which the powder flashed in the pan has set fire. These curious contrivances were made in the eighteenth century, and, to judge from their rarity, were ingenious and costly playthings for the rich, rather than articles in actual every-day use.

## ANECDOTES ABOUT COLLECTORS.

In an entertaining chapter on "The Prudence of Collecting," W. J. Loftie relates some anecdotes well worth repetition. A few years ago, says Mr. Loftie, a merchant in the west of England had in his employment a traveller who was fortunate enough to possess a taste for black-letter books. He never neglected an opportunity of picking up a little book printed before our ordinary type was in common use. And one day he found a prize—four prizes in fact. They were a number of Wycliffe's writings, printed in London, evidently for popular reading, but very small and curious. He bought them for a shilling each—that is, for four shillings altogether. He could find no account of them in any of the works on bibliography, and began to think they must be valuable. He had them very handsomely bound, which did not cost him more than £2, so that his whole investment amounted to about £2 4s.

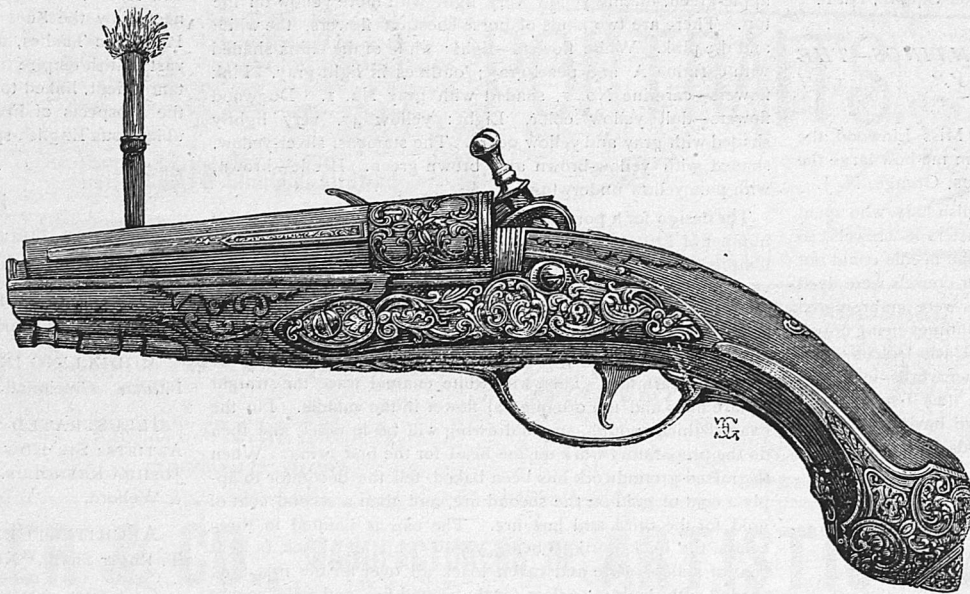
The commercial traveller bethought him once, when

times were bad, that he would sell some of the little books he had collected. So he sent a selection up to a well-known auction-room in London, and included in the parcel his four little Wycliffes. They were duly put up and knocked down, and the four little Wycliffes fetched four hundred pounds—that is, one hundred pounds apiece. It is easy to calculate the interest the



"GOUPILLON," OR HOLY-WATER SPRINKLER.

travelling collector made on his original outlay. He spent £2 4s., and kept the books two years, during which time he was out of the interest, say, at 10 per cent, or thereabout, 5s. So that when his books were put up they had cost him £2 9s. Then the auctioneers' expenses amounted to 12½ per cent, or £50; and his whole profit was £347 11s., or about seven thousand per cent per annum, for each of the two years!



"PISTOLET-BRIQUET," OR FIRE-KINDLING PISTOL.

The late Canon R. was a man of taste. When he began life he was poor, and lived in a small house near the high road. One day a tinker came to him with his bag of old iron, and said he had heard that Mr. R. was a collector of curiosities. Presently, after much fumbling among the old iron, he brought out a bronze processional cross of the utmost beauty, made probably in the

fourteenth century, and altogether such a magnificent example of the art that poor Mr. R.'s heart beat with excitement merely at the sight of it. His practised eye showed him, as he examined it, that the bronze surface had formerly been heavily plated with silver, and in places even with gold, and the cross must have been borne before some great abbot, possibly before an archbishop.

With a trembling voice, for he had very little money, he asked the tinker how much he wanted for the cross. "Sixpence, sir," said the man; "and indeed I think it's quite worth it, sir—it is, I'm sure." Mr. R. thought he was dreaming. "Sixpence," he repeated. "Well, sir, I gave nearly that for it," said the man; "and there's more than the weight of copper in it." Mr. R. was so agitated he could hardly summon up strength to take out the sixpence. As soon as the tinker had it in his hand, he picked up his bag, and walked away quickly.

Mr. R. looked at the cross, and could hardly believe his good fortune. Then he looked at the retreating figure of the tinker. It seemed like robbery to give him only sixpence for such a treasure. He called him back. The man came back very slowly and doubtfully. "Look here," said Mr. R., "I think this cross is worth more than sixpence. I'll give you a shilling." The tinker looked twice at it and twice at the priest's face. Then he took it, and again departed.

Mr. R. looked at the cross again, and went into the house with his treasure. But when he had laid it on the table, his mind was reassured, and again his conscience smote him. It was worth more than 1s. 6d. He would give the man half a crown—fortunately he had half a crown in his pocket. The tinker had nearly reached the gate. Mr. R. called him. He stopped. "Look here, I think I have given you too little for that cross." The man came no nearer. Mr. R. advanced toward him. He retreated. "I'll give you half a crown. Here it is," said Mr. R., putting his hand into his pocket. The tinker looked at him for a moment. Then with a look of deep suspicion, he turned and took to his heels.

And yet the cross was an art treasure for which the tinker might have got many pounds if he had been wise enough!

THE Musée de Cluny has recently acquired two noteworthy relics—a magnificent processional cross of silver gilt of the fourteenth century, and a Venetian cabinet of the sixteenth century. The former is adorned with figures in high relief and of fine execution. On one side are the effigies of Christ, the Virgin, John and Peter, and Mary Magdalen; on the other side are the Evangelists with their attributes. The bottom of the cross is ornamented with translucent enamels representing the Apostles and emblems of the Virtues. This relic is in perfect order, and was found in an Apennine convent. It is one of the finest works of its kind, a most desirable addition to the great museum. The price paid by M. du Sommerard was 9800 francs. Prince Demidoff gave 15,000 francs for it. The cabinet cost the Musée 4500 francs.

In buying manuscripts the great difficulty consists in knowing whether they are perfect or not. In Missals always look for a painting of the crucifixion. If this is wanting the book is almost certainly imperfect. In books of "Hours," you may be equally particular in seeking a calendar. Without a calendar the book would have been practically useless.